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KNUCKLES™
THE ECHIDNA
DIRECT EDITION

KNUCKLES™

BOOK SEVENTEEN

DEEP COVER

PART ONE OF TWO

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BORN TO THE MOST NOBLE OF ECHIDNA HOUSES, THE LATEST TO CONTINUE THE FAMILY HERITAGE AND RESPONSIBILITY AS GUARDIAN OF THE FLOATING ISLAND, DEFENDER OF ALL FROM THE FORCES OF EVIL FROM THE WORLD BEYOND AS WELL AS THOSE WHO WOULD THREATEN WITHIN, HE IS NONE OTHER THAN KNUCKLES THE ECHIDNA!

LAST ISSUE, WE LEFT KNUCKLES CONTEMPLATING MANY QUESTIONS ALONGSIDE JULIE-SU, WHO HAD MORE THAN A FEW THOUGHTS OF HER OWN. WHILE THEY MAY HAVE BEEN LOST IN THEIR OWN REFLECTIONS, THERE WERE OTHERS WHO WERE THINKING ABOUT THEM, AND WONDERING WHETHER OR NOT ANY ACTION SHOULD BE TAKEN.

BECAUSE, YOU SEE, THESE OTHERS KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT KNUCKLES THAT NOT EVEN HE KNOWS...
YET.

A SECRET SO MONUMENTAL, THAT IT COULD HAVE IMPORTANT CONSEQUENCES FOR MANY... ESPECIALLY FOR KNUCKLES.

UNFORTUNATELY FOR KNUCKLES, THERE ARE MANY OTHER SECRETS ABOUT HIS FAMILY HE DOES NOT YET KNOW, WHICH NOT ONLY COULD PORTEND DIRE CONSEQUENCES FOR HIM, BUT FOR ALL OF HIS FELLOW ECHIDNAS AS WELL.

IT IS ON THE SURFACE OF MOBIUS THAT ONE OF THE KEYS TO UNLOCKING THESE SECRETS MAKES ITSELF KNOWN...

IT IS THE DAWN OF A NEW DAY, AS SOMEWHERE IN THE FOREST A LONE FIGURE HAS EMERGED FOR HIS DAILY WALK...
ABOVE ME-- AFTER ALL THIS TIME--?

CAN IT BE--? I HAVE TO KNOW!

IT IS!!!
THE ONE PLACE I NEVER THOUGHT I'D SET FOOT ON AGAIN!

NO! MAKE THAT--

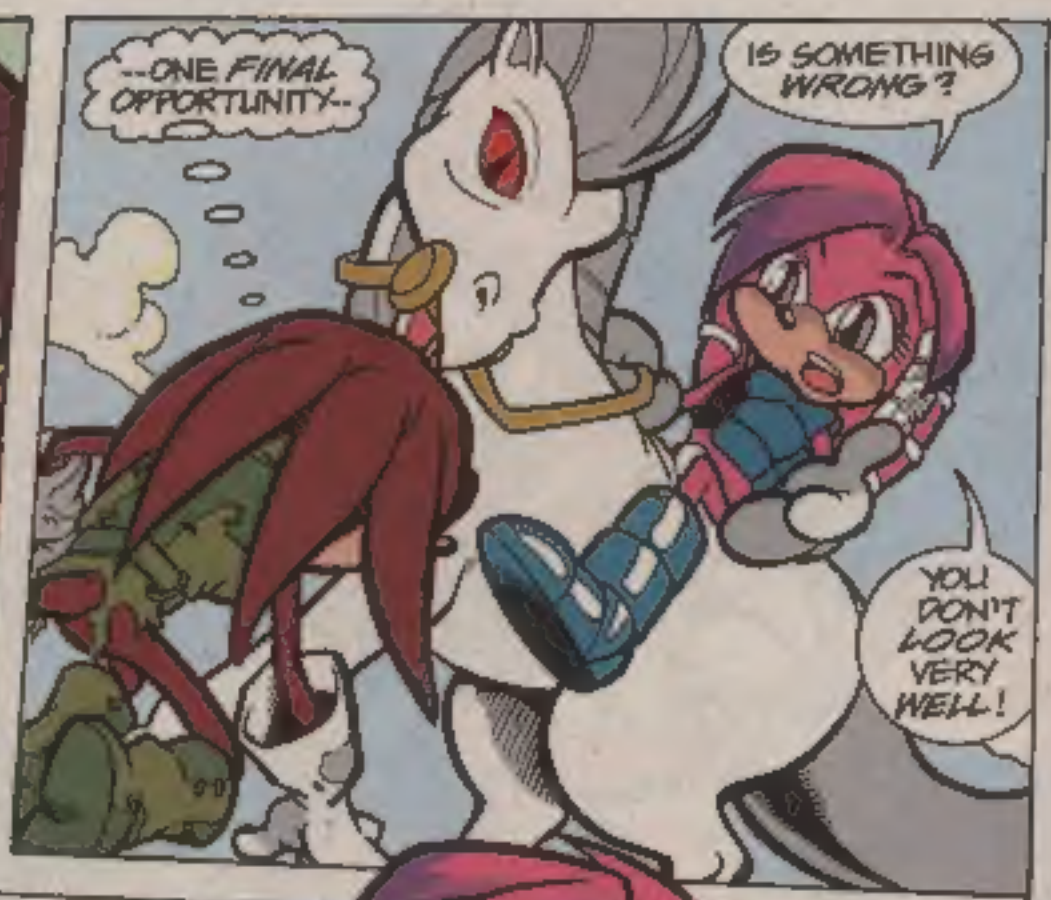
WAIT! I HEAR FOOTSTEPS!

--HOOFSTEPS!
BY THE STARS! A STREAKING PASHA--
--AND ITS RIDER!
EEEEYYAAAHH!
HOLD, THUNDER!

...A DARK
LEGIONNAIRE!!!
HELLO?
I MUST BE GOING MAD!
FATE COULDN'T POSSIBLY BE SO CRUEL TO ME!

I'M SORRY IF I SCARED YOU!
IS EVERYTHING ALRIGHT?
THE GUARDIAN WHO FAILED!!!

THEN AGAIN—
MAYBE THIS IS FATE'S WAY OF GIVING ME ONE MORE CHANCE--

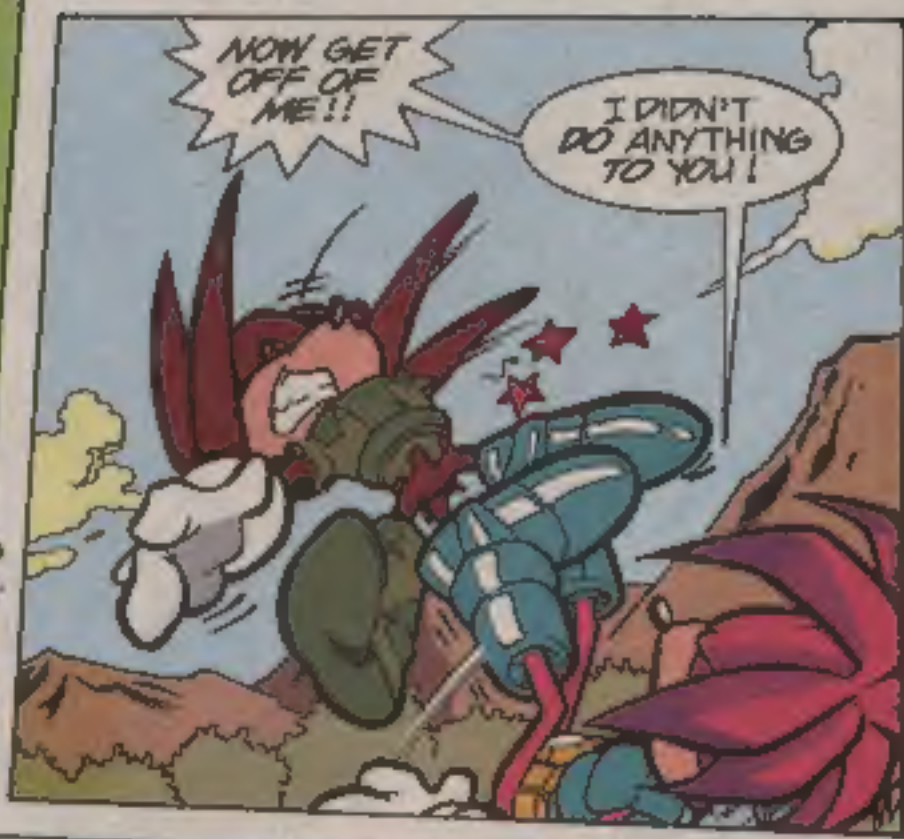

--ONE FINAL OPPORTUNITY--
IS SOMETHING WRONG?
YOU DON'T LOOK VERY WELL!

--TO MAKE AMENDS!
HEY!

OOF!
UGH!
WHUUMPH!

WHY DON'T YOU DO US ALL A FAVOR AND BE GONE FROM OUR SIGHT, YOU BIONIC PIECE OF SLIME!!!

SORRY!
THAT'S NOT IN MY GAME PLAN TODAY!


NOW GET OFF OF ME!!
I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING TO YOU!

LYING WENCH!
YOUR KIND CAN NEVER BE TRUSTED!
NOT AFTER WHAT YOU DID TO US!
NOT AFTER WHAT YOU DID TO ME!

I'M GOING TO MAKE YOU PAY!!!

THEN-- SHUT UP-- AND--JUST-- DO-- IT--!

WELL?

SONIC TAKES ON A WHOLE NEW IMAGE

BE THERE
WHEN SONIC,
KNUCKLES & THE
FREEDOM FIGHTERS
MEET SHADOWHAWK,
THE SAVAGE DRAGON AND
OTHER HEROES OF IMAGE COMICS
IN SONIC SUPER SPECIAL #7
ON SALE OCTOBER 1998!

AWWW-HMMMMMM...

AWWW-HMMMMMM...

BAM!

WELL, WELL, WELL! AS I LIVE AND BREATHE, KNUCKLES--

--YOU NEVER CEASE TO AMAZE!

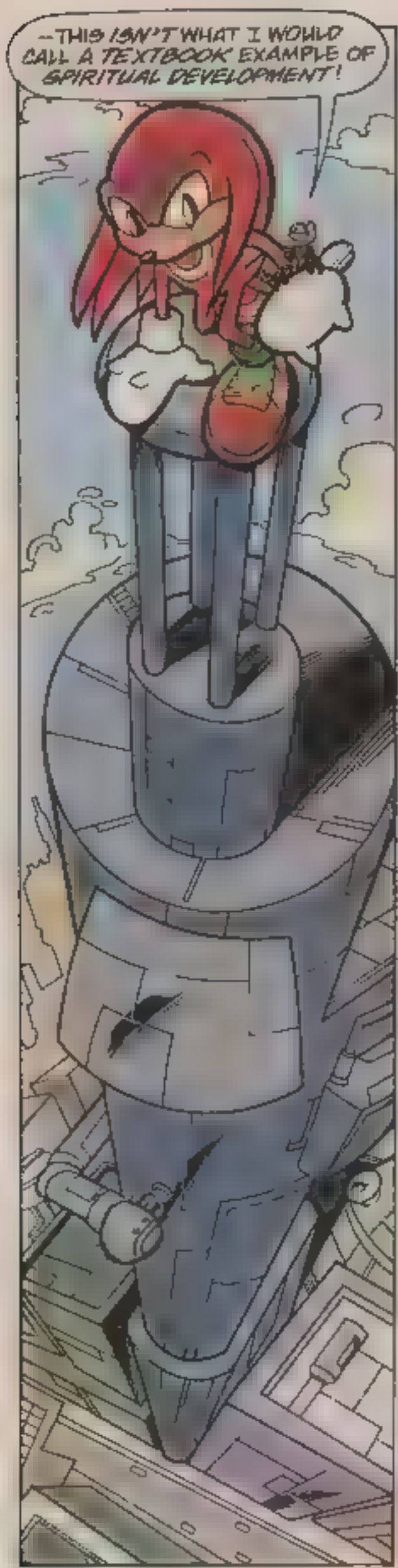
AWWW-HMMMMMM...

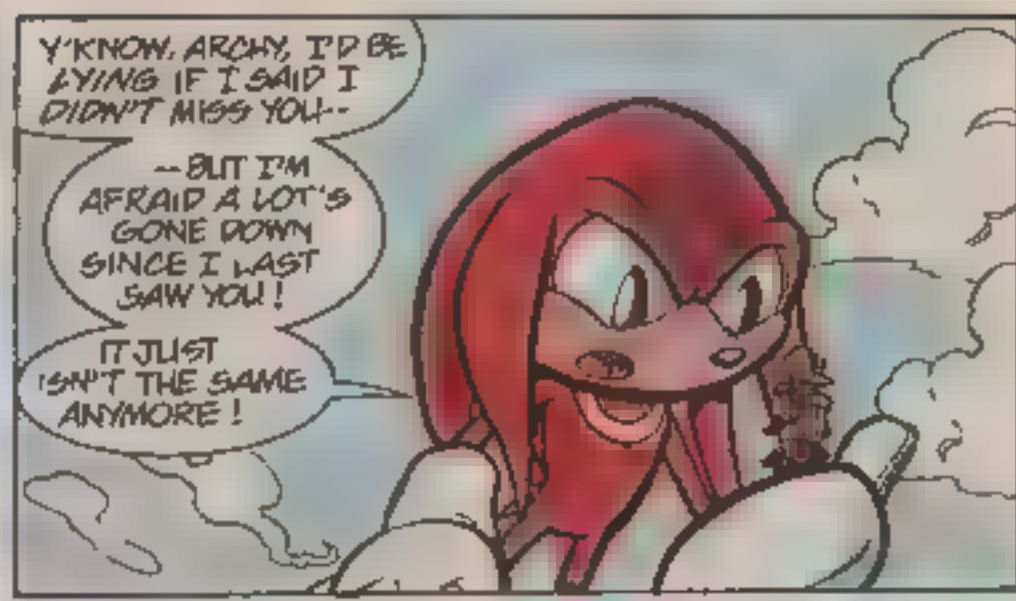
I REMEMBER WHEN I FIRST WAS TEACHING YOU THE BENEFITS OF MEDITATION--*

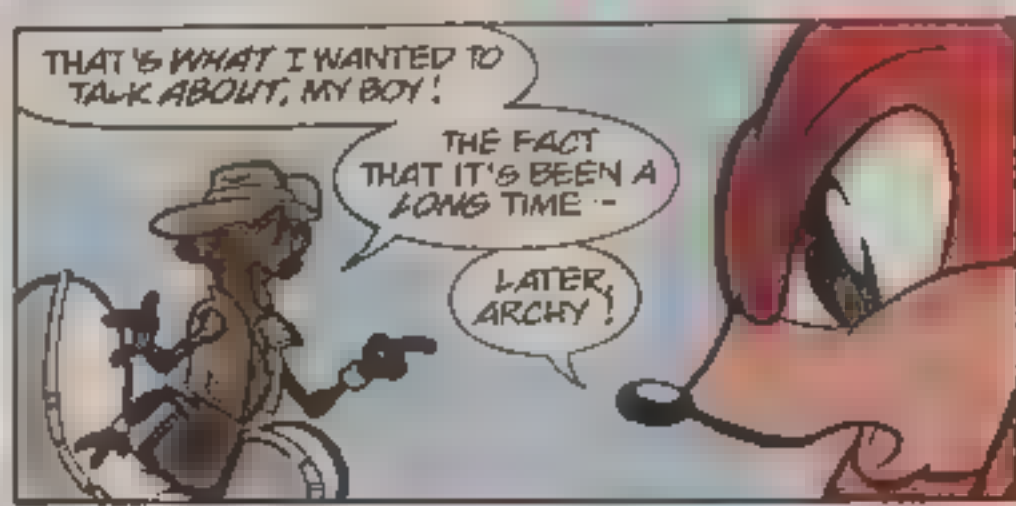
--AND I WONDERED IF ANYTHING I SAID REALLY SUNK IN!

UPON FURTHER REVIEW, I CAN EMPHATICALLY STATE--

* WAAAAY BACK IN KNUCKLES #4 -- JUSTIN.


--THIS ISN'T WHAT I WOULD CALL A TEXTBOOK EXAMPLE OF SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT!


Y'KNOW, ARCHY, I'D BE LYING IF I SAID I DIDN'T MISS YOU--
--BUT I'M AFRAID A LOT'S GONE DOWN SINCE I LAST SAW YOU!
IT JUST ISN'T THE SAME ANYMORE!


THAT'S WHAT I WANTED TO TALK ABOUT, MY BOY!
THE FACT THAT IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME --
LATER, ARCHY!

LATER?

YEAH --

MR.

IT WORKED!

I COULD "SEE" MY FLIGHT PATH BEFORE ME--AIDED BY THE GUIDING STAR GEM YANAR GAVE ME!*

*SEE KNUCKLES #12--JFG

THIS STONE WOULD EXPLAIN HOW I WAS ABLE TO KNOW MY WAY HOME FROM THE BADLANDS!*

HOW'S OUR BOY, LOCKE?

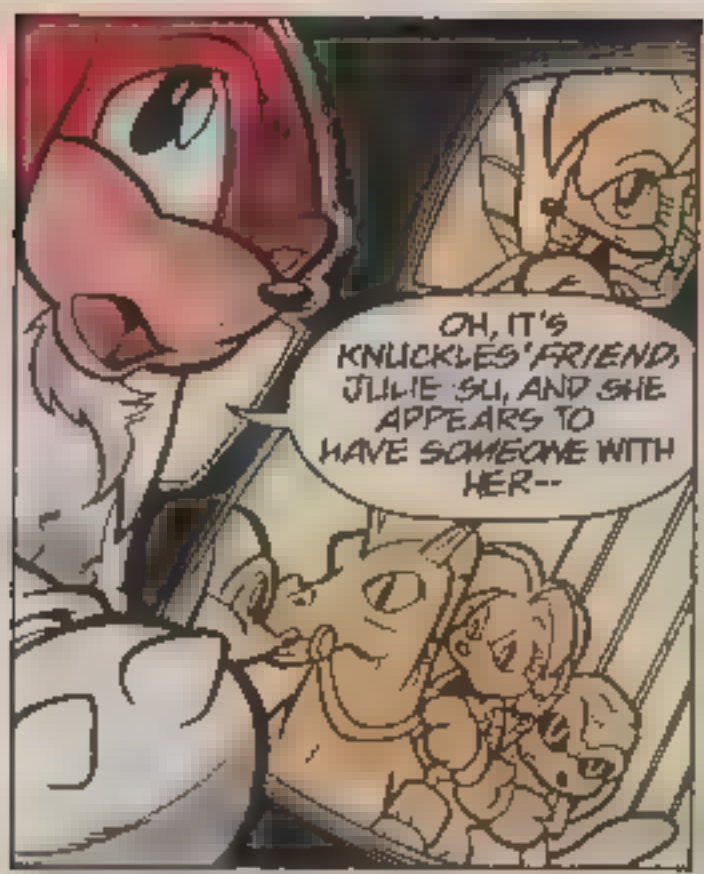
*CHECK OUT KNUCKLES #15 AND #16 FOR THE DETAILS--JUSTIN

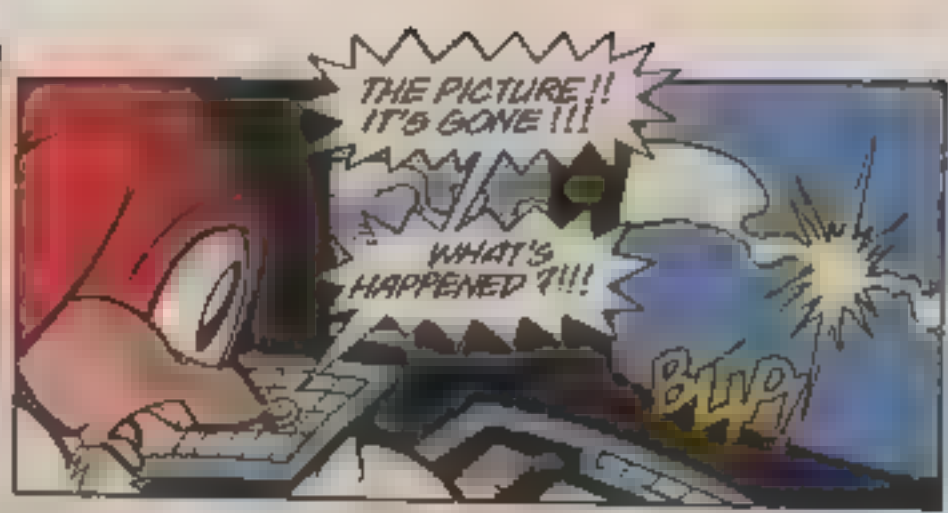
IN A VERY CURIOUS MOOD, GRANDFATHER SOJOURNER!

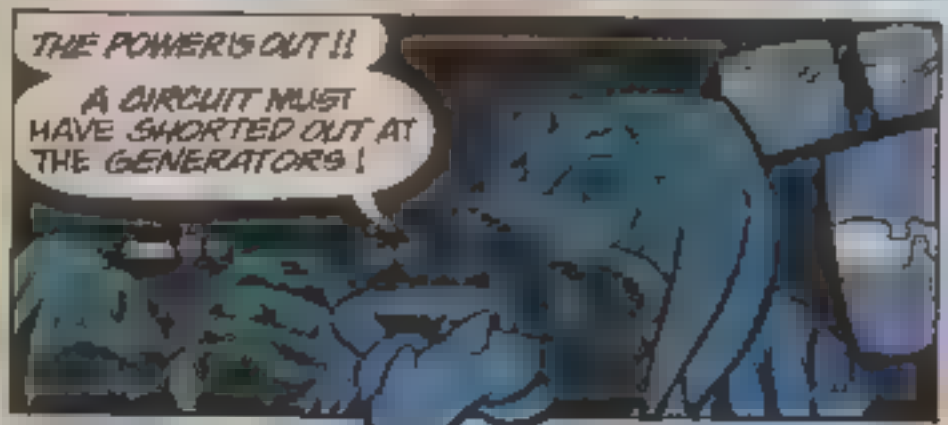
HE'S EXAMINING THE GUIDING STAR GEM--

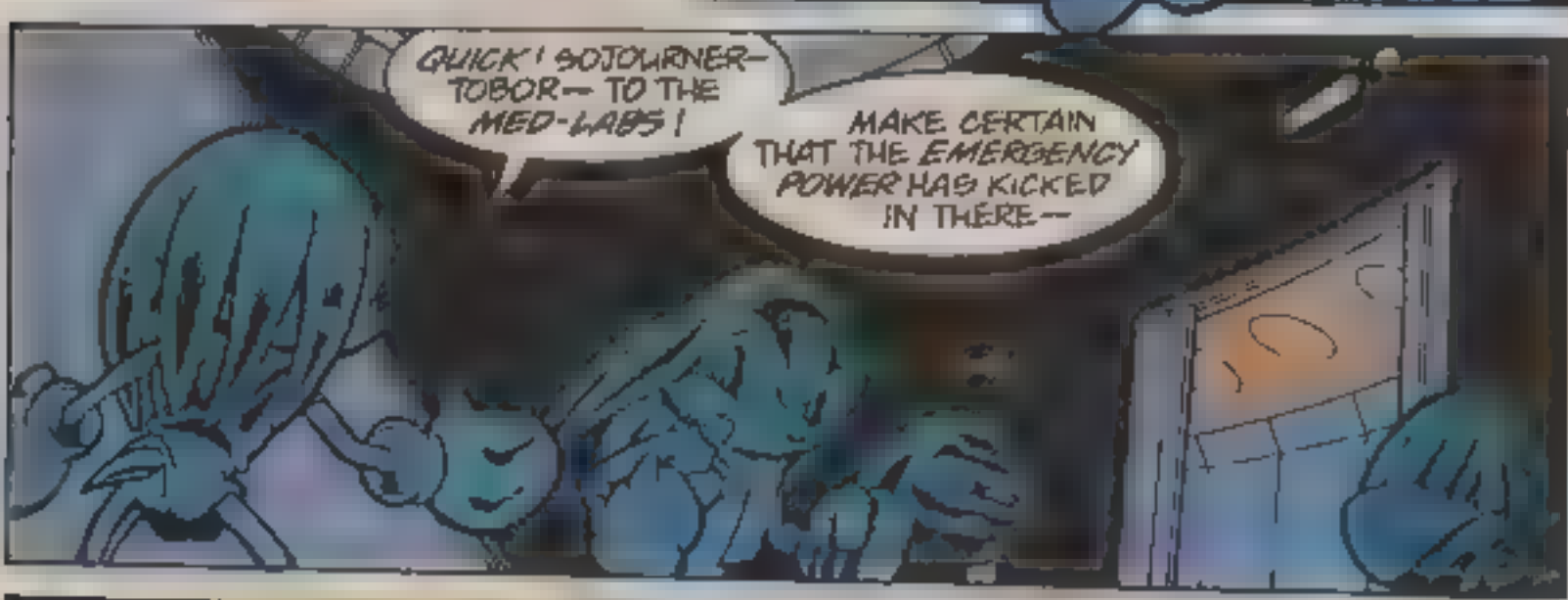
--AND APPARENTLY HE'S ON THE VERGE [redacted] UNLOCKING ITS [redacted]!

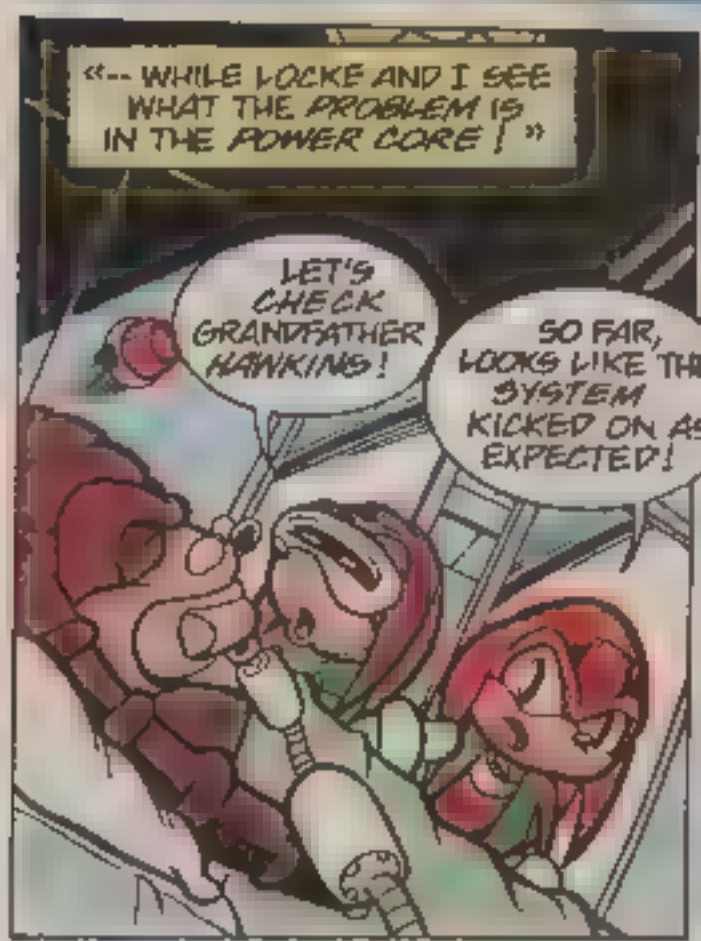
WHO'S THAT APPROACHING KNUCKLES?

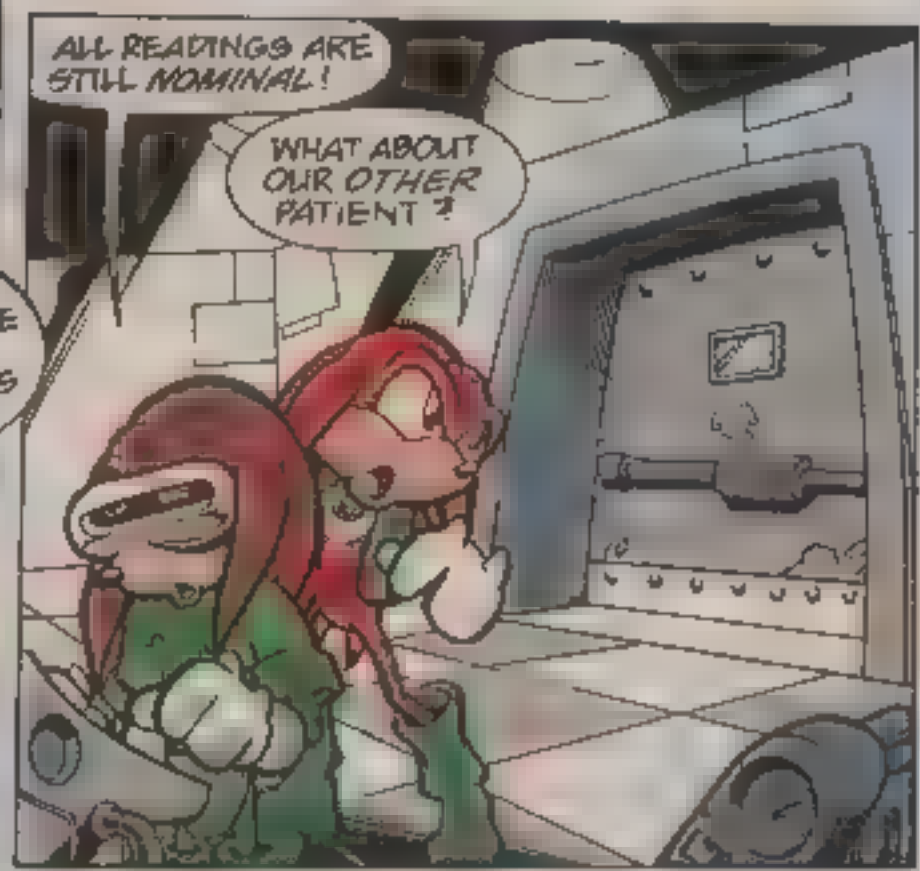

OH, IT'S KNUCKLES' FRIEND, JULIE SU, AND SHE APPEARS TO HAVE SOMEONE WITH HER--

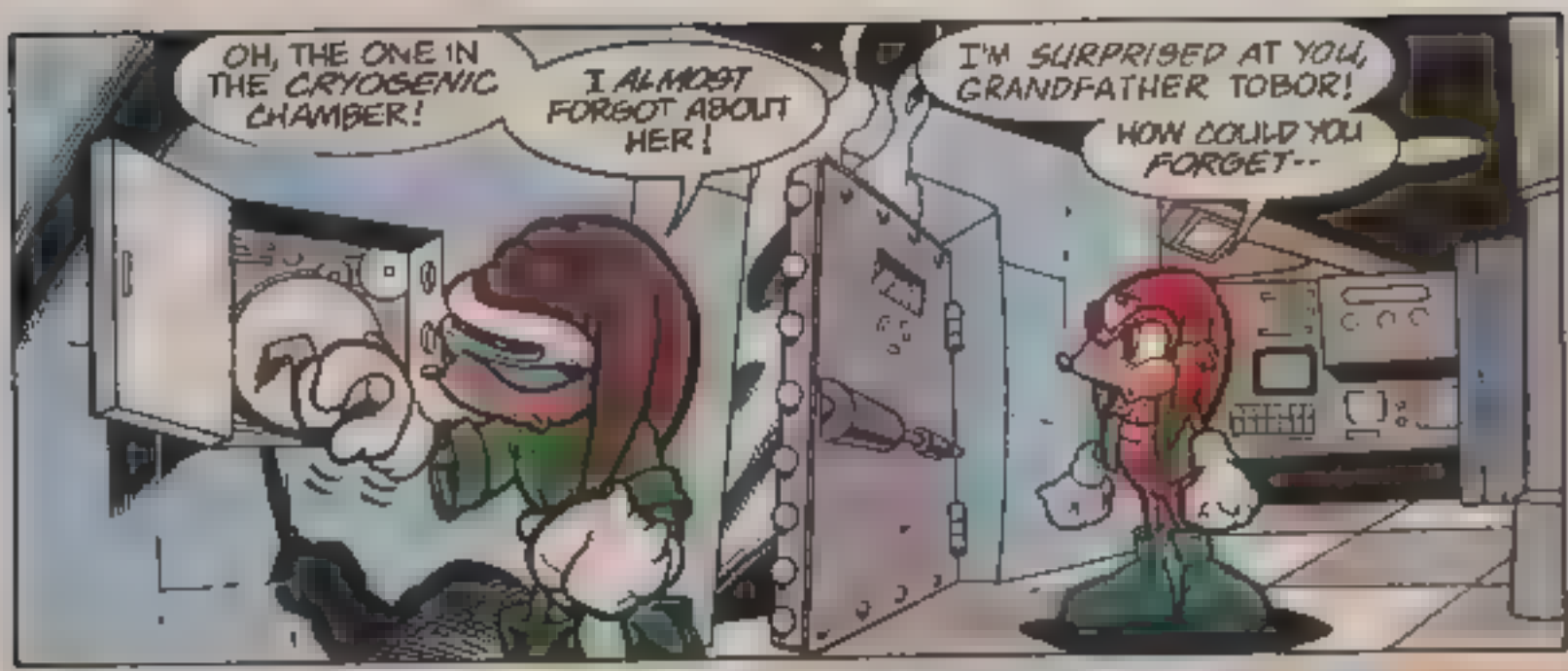

THE PICTURE!! IT'S GONE!!!
WHAT'S HAPPENED?!!!
BLAP


THE POWER IS OUT!!
A CIRCUIT MUST HAVE SHORTED OUT AT THE GENERATORS!

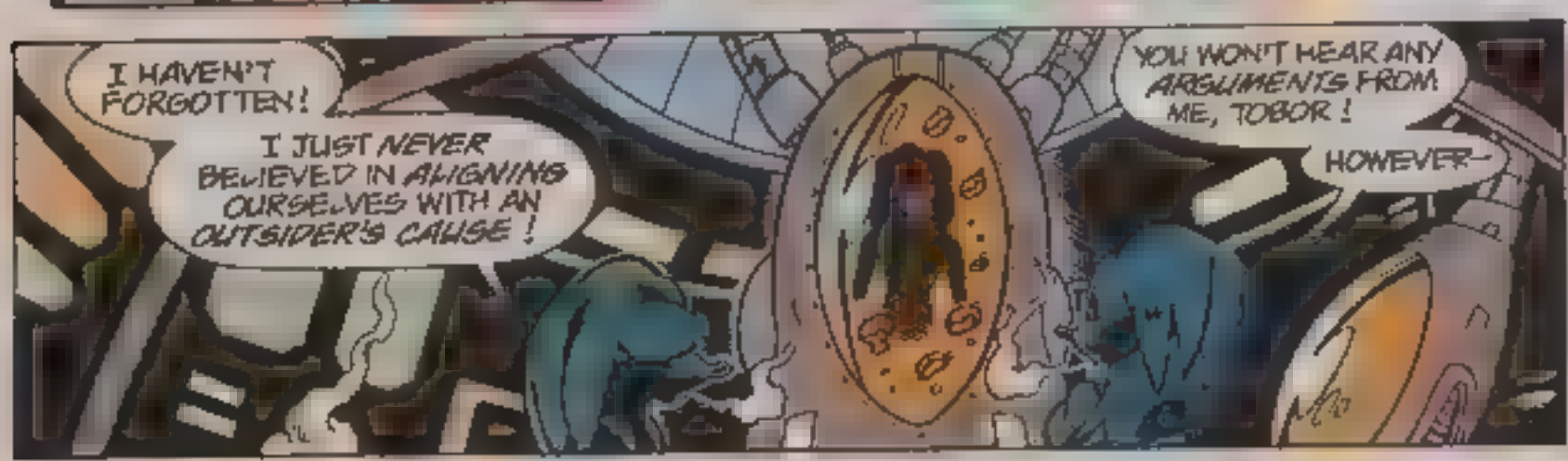

QUICK! SOJOURNER-TOBOR-- TO THE MED-LABS!
MAKE CERTAIN THAT THE EMERGENCY POWER HAS KICKED IN THERE--

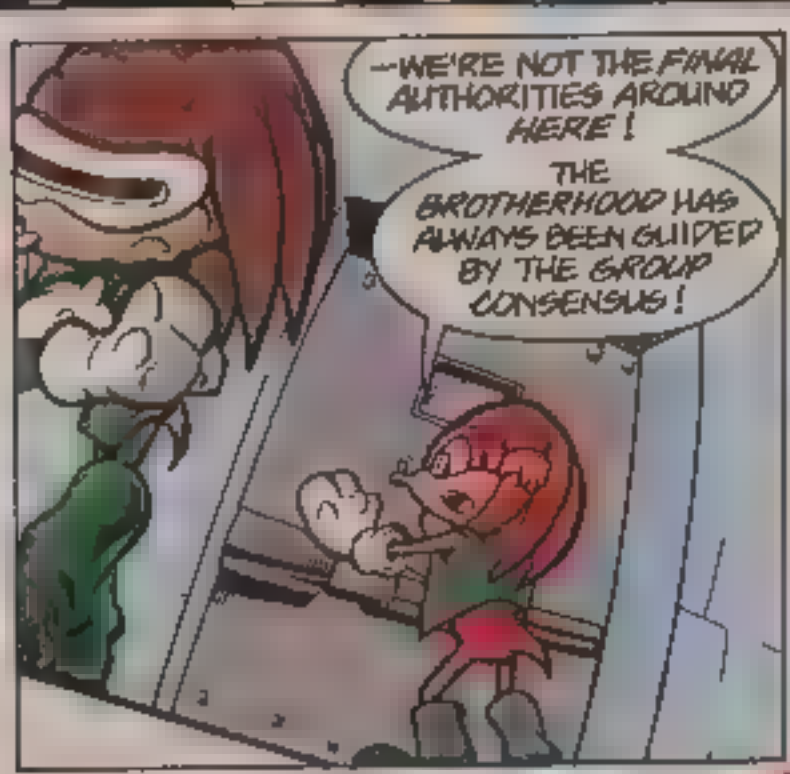

«-- WHILE LOCKE AND I SEE WHAT THE PROBLEM IS IN THE POWER CORE!»
LET'S CHECK GRANDFATHER HAWKINS!
SO FAR, LOOKS LIKE THE SYSTEM KICKED ON AS EXPECTED!

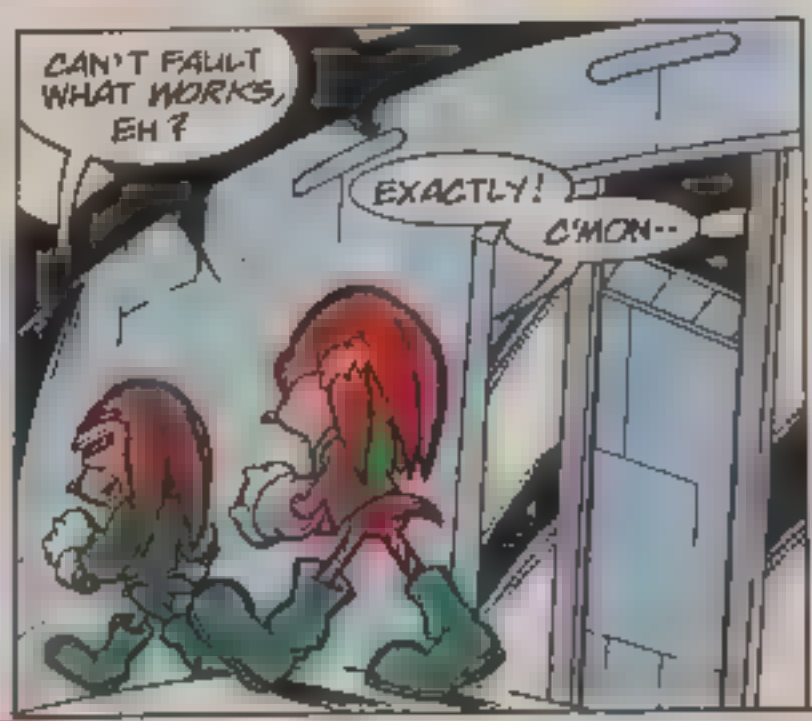

ALL READINGS ARE STILL NOMINAL!
WHAT ABOUT OUR OTHER PATIENT?


OH, THE ONE IN THE CRYOGENIC CHAMBER!
I ALMOST FORGOT ABOUT HER!
I'M SURPRISED AT YOU, GRANDFATHER TOBOR!
HOW COULD YOU FORGET--

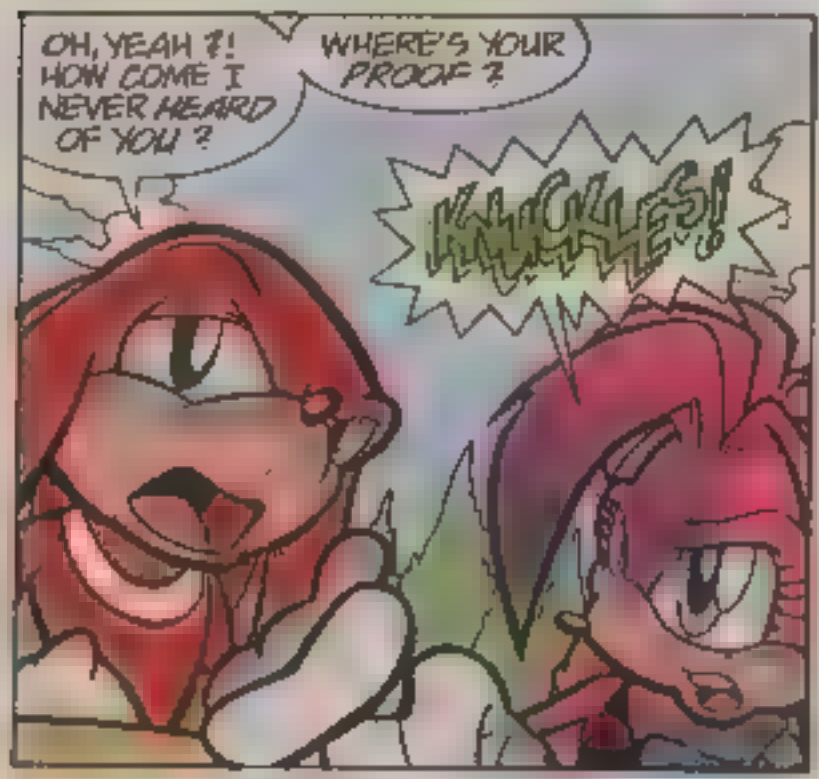
--OUR HONORED GUEST AFTER ALL THESE YEARS?
ESPECIALLY WITH THE BOY WANDERING--

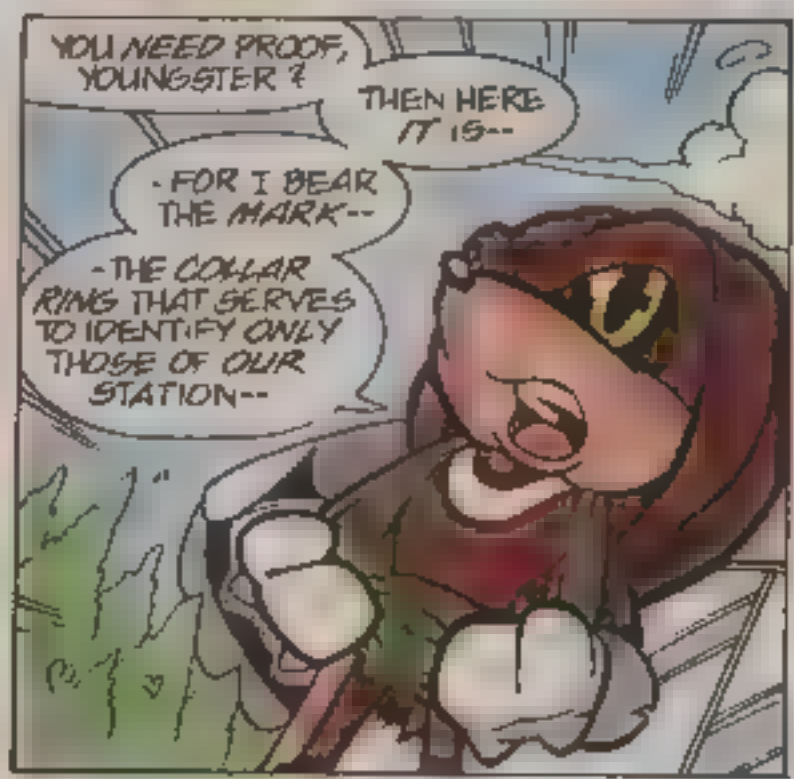

I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN!
I JUST NEVER BELIEVED IN ALIGNING OURSELVES WITH AN OUTSIDER'S CAUSE!
YOU WON'T HEAR ANY ARGUMENTS FROM ME, TOBOR!
HOWEVER--

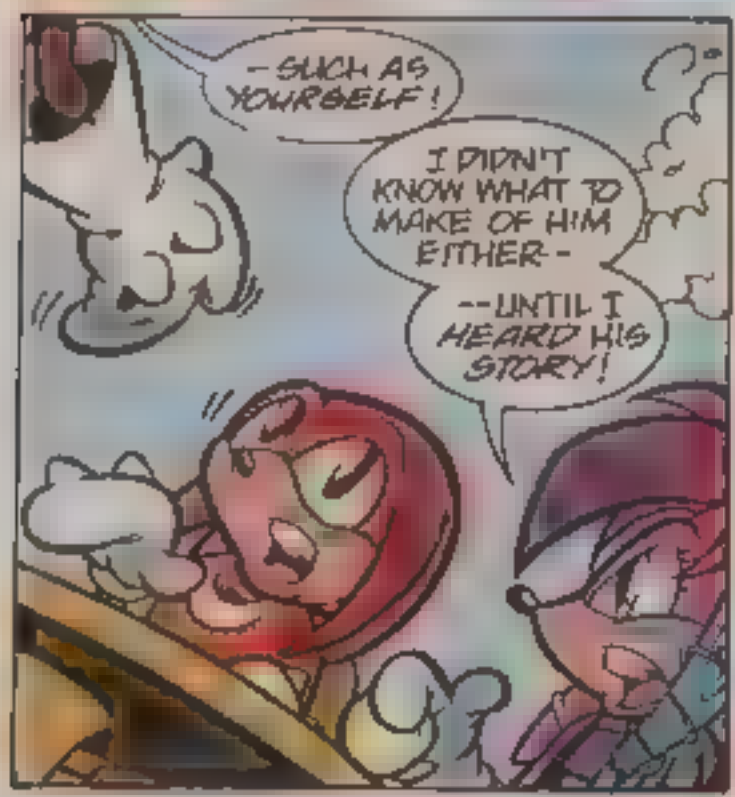

--WE'RE NOT THE FINAL AUTHORITIES AROUND HERE!
THE BROTHERHOOD HAS ALWAYS BEEN GUIDED BY THE GROUP CONSENSUS!

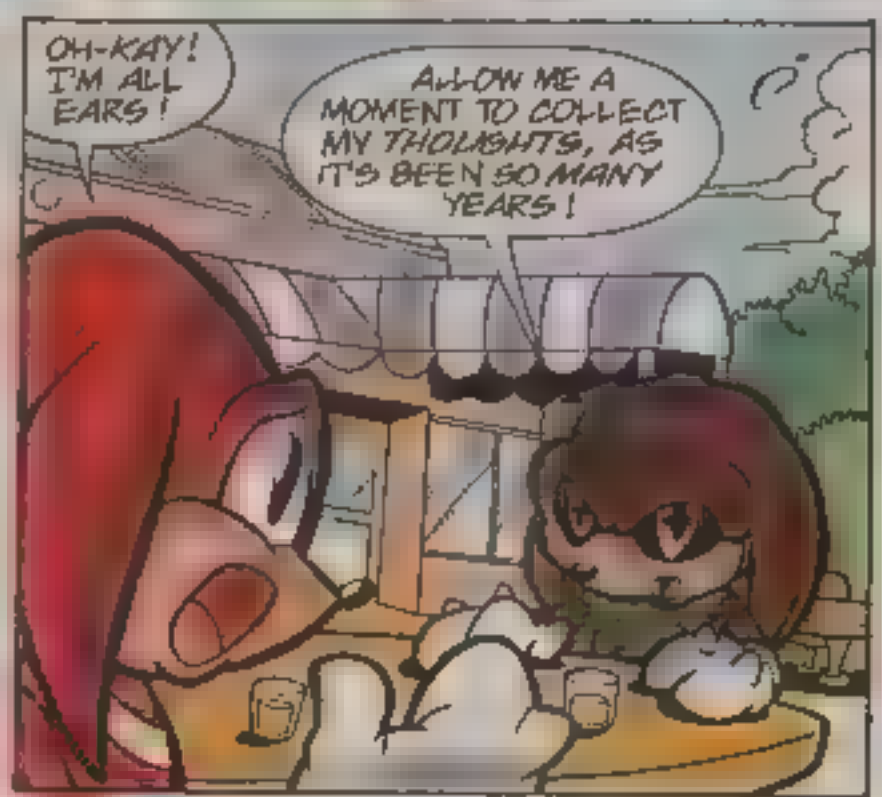

CAN'T FAULT WHAT WORKS, EH?
EXACTLY!
C'MON--

"--LET'S SEE IF HELP IS NEEDED ELSEWHERE!"
YOU SAY YOU'RE WHO?!!
MY NAME IS TOBOR!
I AM--
--OR AT LEAST I WAS--
--A GUARDIAN OF THE FLOATING ISLAND!









I WAS A MERE LAD OF TWENTY—NOT MUCH OLDER THAN YOU, I IMAGINE - WHEN MY FATHER, HAWKING, HAD APPOINTED ME GUARDIAN IN HIS STEAD...

TOBOR, IT'S TIME YOU BECAME GUARDIAN!

YOU'VE PROVEN YOURSELF WORTHY OF THE TITLE!

"YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN MOTHER AND VONI-CA! THEY WERE SO PROUD!

"IT WAS HIS NEXT WORDS THAT TOOK ME BY SURPRISE...

I HAVE TO RETURN TO THE FLOATING ISLAND!

IT'LL BE UP TO YOU TO LOOK OUT FOR OUR PEOPLE WHILE I'M AWAY!

BUT, FATHER, THE FLOATING ISLAND WAS DESTROYED BY THE DINGOES!*

IF IT WASN'T FOR YOU WE'D ALL BE GONERS!

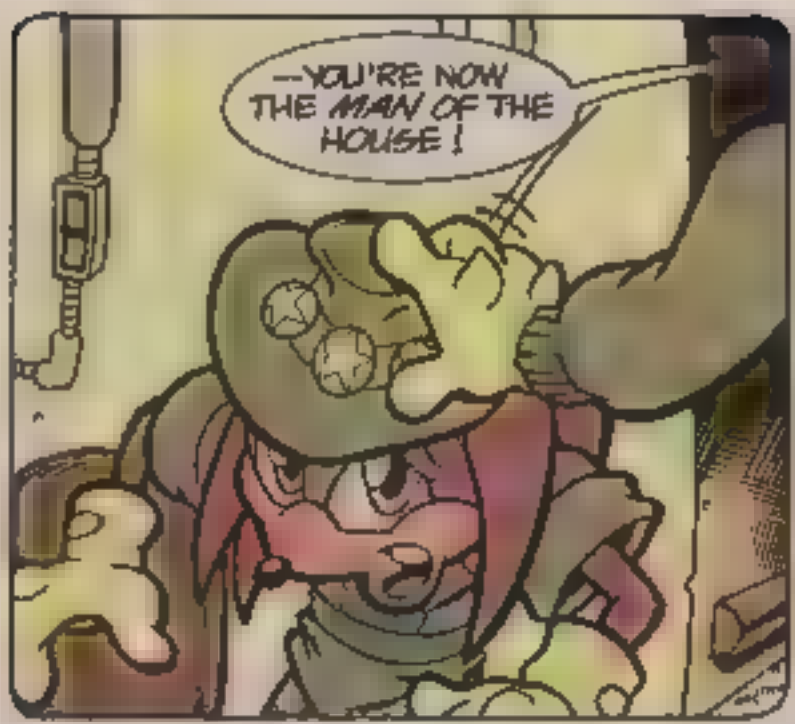
* AS CHRONICLED IN KNUCKLES #6 HISTORIAN JUSTIN.

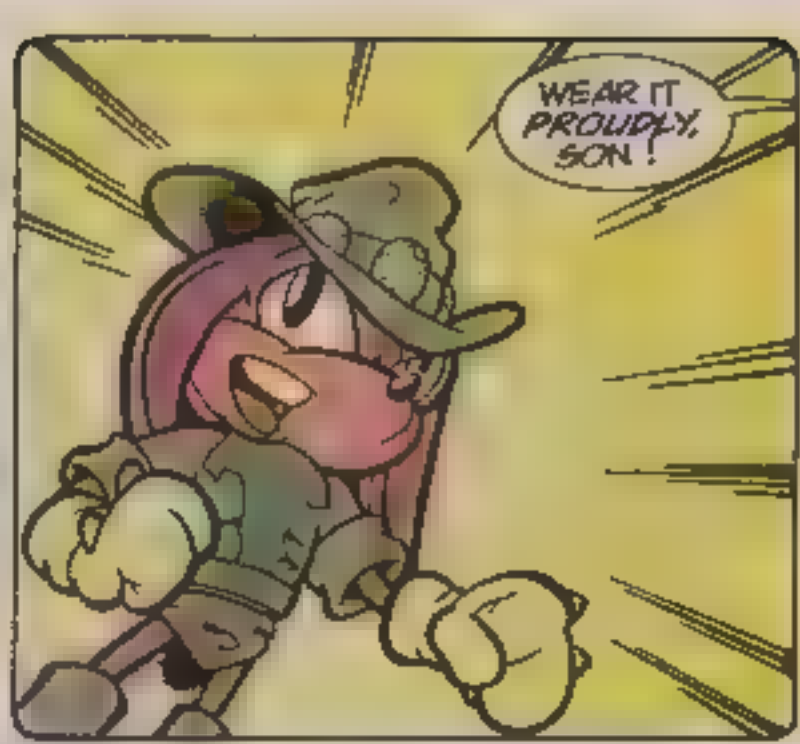
THE FLOATING ISLAND WAS DEVASTATED, TOBOR— BUT NOT DESTROYED!

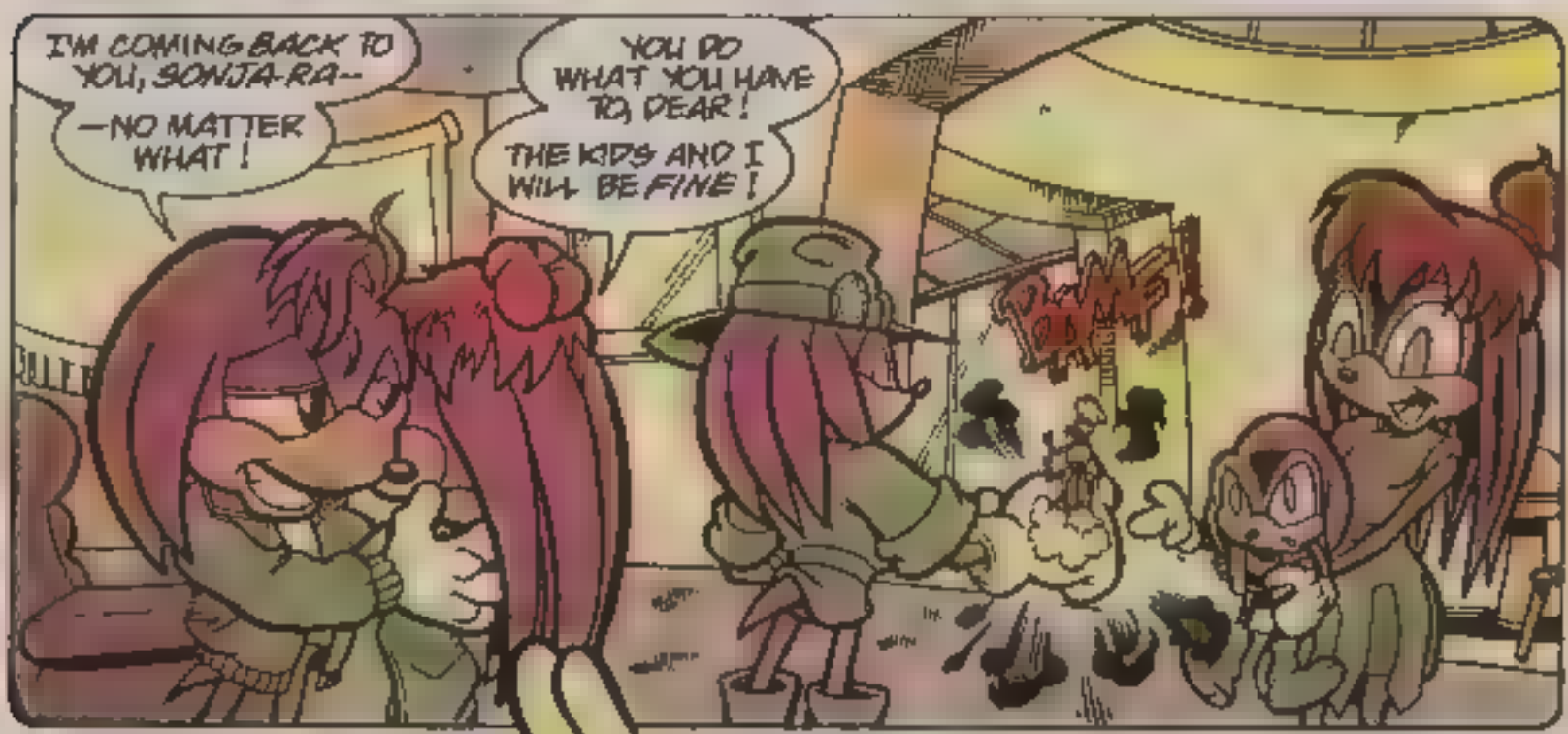
IT'S MY RESPONSIBILITY TO RESTORE IT—

—AND I WON'T REST UNTIL ECHIDNAOPOLIS AND ITS PEOPLE ARE DELIVERED FROM THIS POCKET ZONE BACK TO OUR RIGHTFUL HOMELAND!

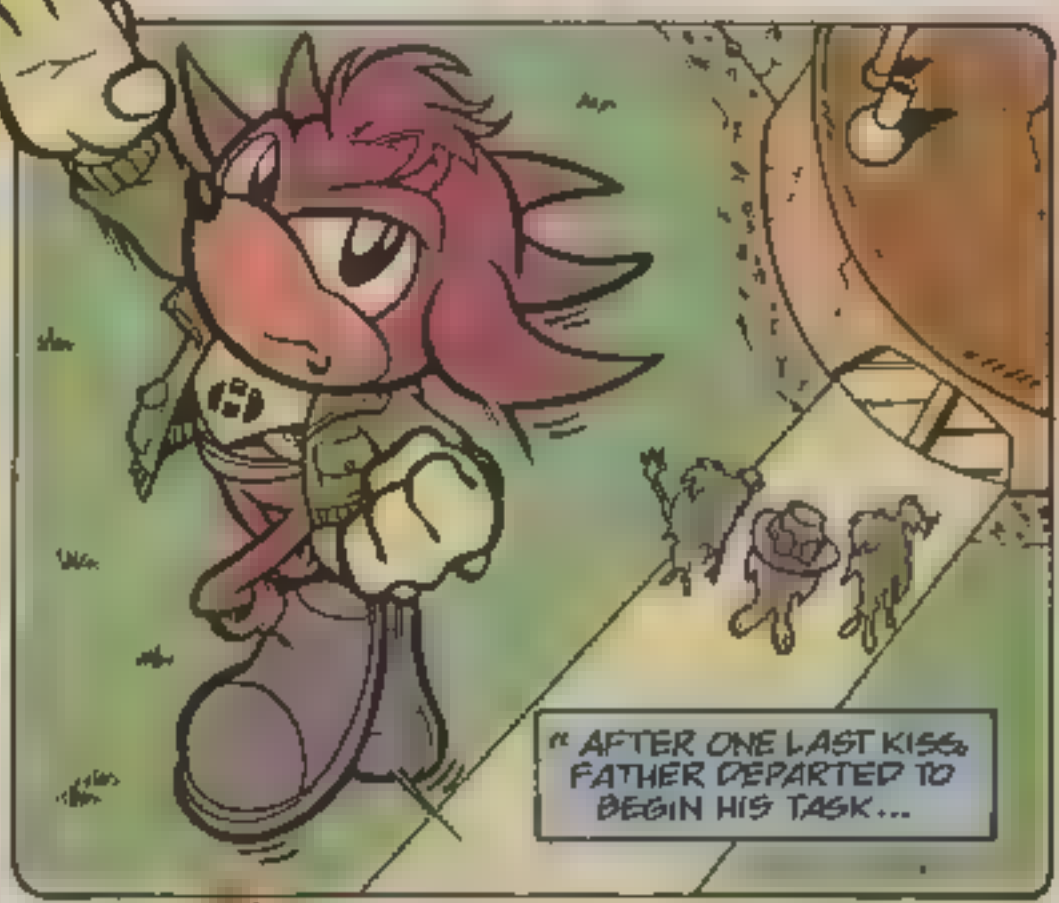
THAT MEANS-


—YOU'RE NOW THE MAN OF THE HOUSE!


WEAR IT PROUDLY, SON!


I'M COMING BACK TO YOU, SONJA-RA—
—NO MATTER WHAT!
YOU DO WHAT YOU HAVE TO, DEAR!
THE KIDS AND I WILL BE FINE!

JUST MAKE SURE YOU DO COME BACK TO ME!


" AFTER ONE LAST KISS, FATHER DEPARTED TO BEGIN HIS TASK...

"...AND MY LIFE AS A GUARDIAN BEGAN!

"IT WOULDN'T BE LONG BEFORE I EXPERIENCED MY BAPTISM OF FIRE--

"...OUTSIDE THE CITY LIMITS, WHERE THE HYDROPONICS GARDENS HAD BEEN CONSTRUCTED TO REPLACE THE VAST TRACTS OF FARMLAND LEFT BEHIND ON THE FLOATING ISLAND--

"...FROM AN ENEMY BELIEVED LONG DEFEATED-- THE DARK LEGION!

"ON ONE QUIET AFTERNOON, A RIP IN THE FABRIC OF THE DIMENSIONAL BARRIER OPENED-- AND IN THEY SWARMED-- LIKE LOCUSTS--

-LED BY THE R LEADER-- AN EVIL LEGIONNAIRE WHO CALLED HIMSELF--

MORITORI REX!

CITIZENS OF ECHIDNAOPOLIS-- ACCEPT YOUR BIRTHRIGHT!

RECLAIM THE TECHNOLOGY CREATED BY OUR FOREFATHERS!

YOU'VE ALREADY TAKEN THE FIRST STEPS TOWARDS DOING SO--

PEBBLES

"WHERE'S THE MISSING ORANGE?" CONTEST RULES

OFFICIAL RULES — NO PURCHASE NECESSARY

HOW TO PLAY: [illegible]

ELIGIBILITY: [illegible]

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY: [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

AWRK!!! MORE RULES?

continued on facing page

KNUCKLES™

Fan Art

DANNY S.

SHAWN BARHSDALE
AGE 15

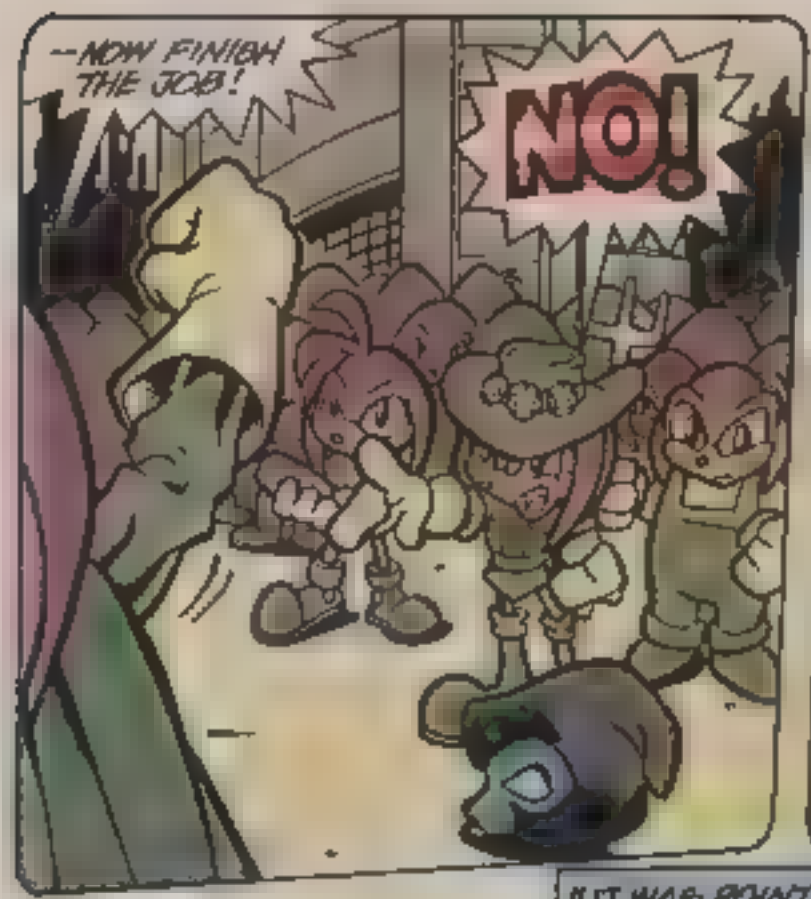
RICKY WINSOR
ONTARIO, CANADA
AGE 8

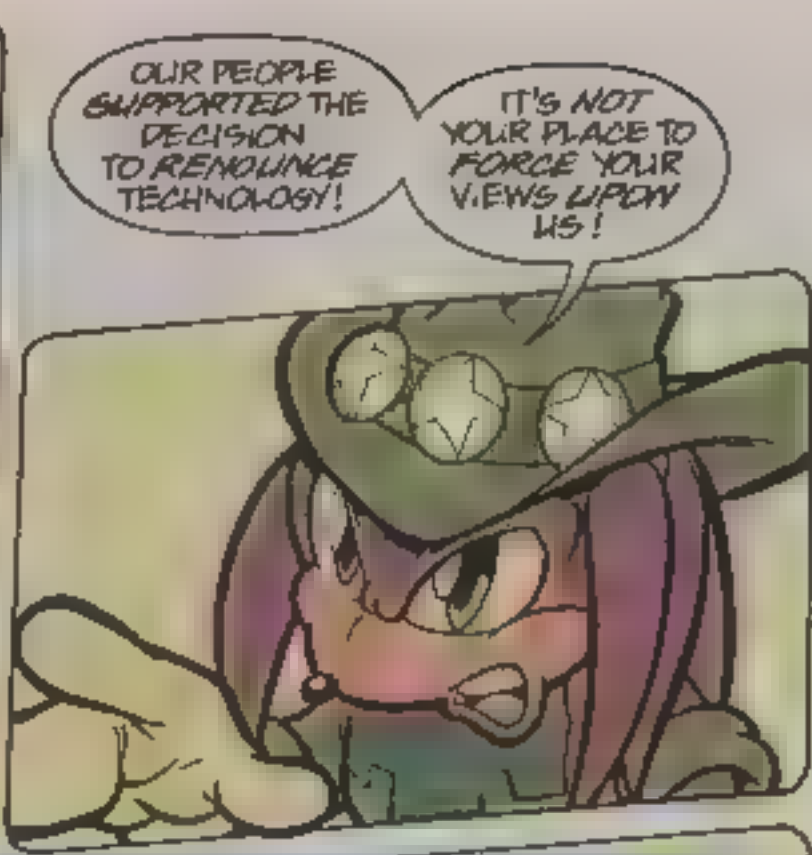
HARRY WATERS
STATESBORO, GA
AGE 10

HYPER KNUCKLES

IF YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR DRAWING PRINTED PLEASE SEND A BLACK & WHITE COPY OF YOUR ART (NO ORIGINALS)

TO: CONSCIENTIOUS FAN ART #1Y= c/o ARCHIE COMIC PUBLICATIONS, INC. P.O. BOX 419 MAMARONECK, NY 10543-0419





"IT WAS POINTLESS TO ARGUE. MORITORI REX REGARDED ANY OPINION, SAVE HIS OWN, AS INSIGNIFICANT!

"THE RESULT WAS A BATTLE OF EPIC PROPORTIONS— THE LIKE OF WHICH FEW HAD EVER SEEN OR EXPERIENCED--FOR THE VERY HEARTS AND MINDS OF THE ECHIDNA POPULACE!

"LITTLE DID I REALIZE IT WOULD SOON TURN PERSONAL...

THAT MARK!

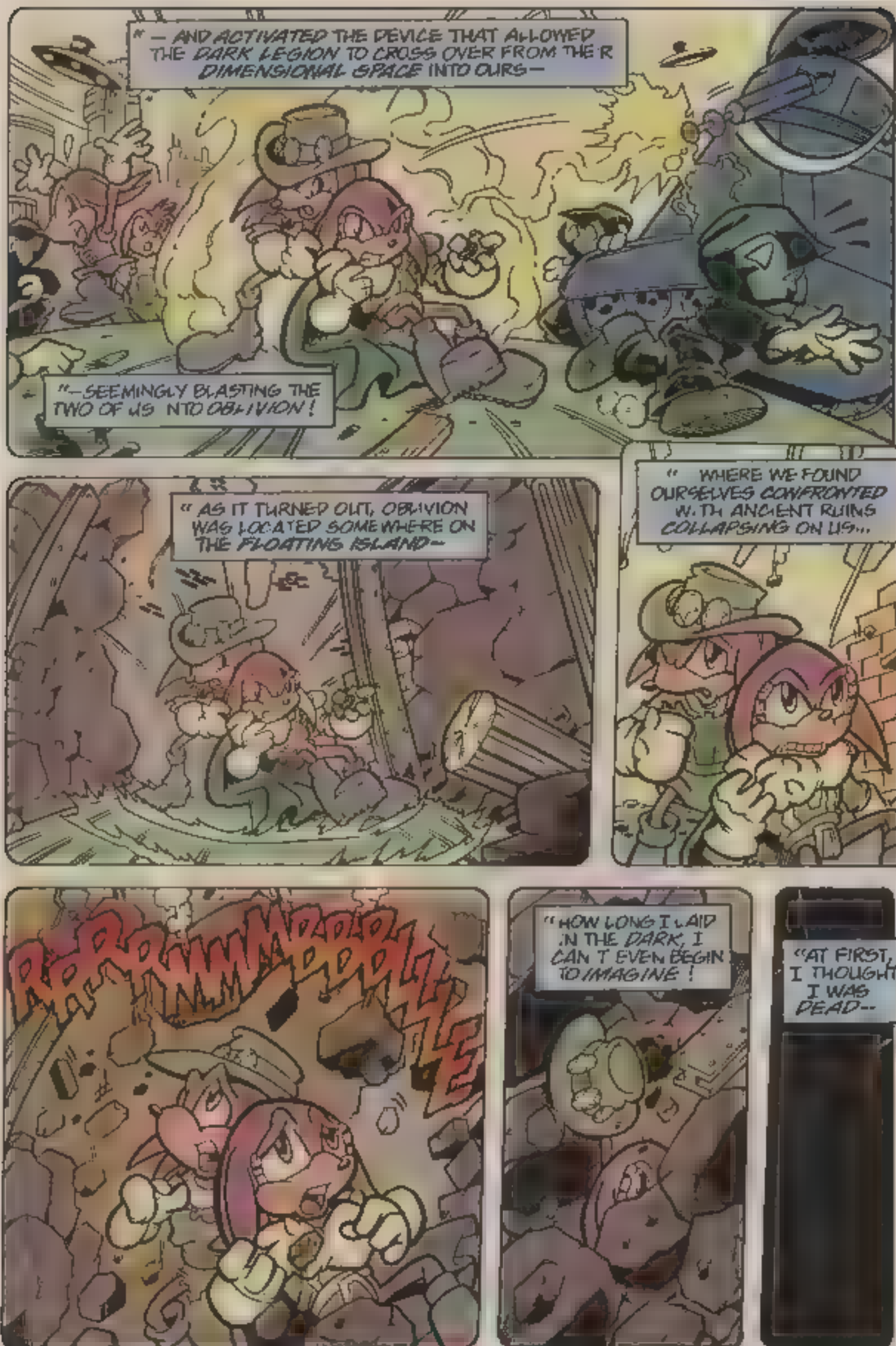
YOU MUST BE A GUARDIAN!!! A DESCENDENT OF STEPPENWOLF!!!

YOU HAVE A LOT TO ANSWER FOR, VILLAIN!

I HAVEN'T A CLUE WHAT YOU'RE YAMMERING ABOUT—

SO WHY DON'T YOU JUST SHUT UP AND

"WE FOUGHT--
"--THE MOTHER OF ALL BATTLES--
"--W TH NEITHER SIDE ASKING--
"- NOR GIVING ANY QUARTER...
"AND JUST WHEN MORITORI REX STARED INTO THE JAWS OF DEFEAT--
" HE TOOK MATTERS INTO HIS OWN HANDS--
K-KLIK!


" — AND ACTIVATED THE DEVICE THAT ALLOWED THE DARK LEGION TO CROSS OVER FROM THEIR DIMENSIONAL SPACE INTO OURS—
"—SEEMINGLY BLASTING THE TWO OF US INTO OBLIVION!
" AS IT TURNED OUT, OBLIVION WAS LOCATED SOMEWHERE ON THE FLOATING ISLAND—
" WHERE WE FOUND OURSELVES CONFRONTED WITH ANCIENT RUINS COLLAPSING ON US...
RRRRUMMMBBBLLLE
"HOW LONG I LAID IN THE DARK, I CAN'T EVEN BEGIN TO IMAGINE!
"AT FIRST, I THOUGHT I WAS DEAD--

"--THEN I AWOKE— STARTLED OUT OF MY STUPOR BY A FAMILIAR SOUND...

TOBOR!!

TOBOR!!!

" IT WAS MY FATHER'S VOICE! SOMEHOW, HE KNEW I WAS HERE --OR SO I THOUGHT--

OH, TOBOR!

WHAT DID THEY DO TO YOU, SON?

"- BUT THEN HIS WORDS SANK IN—

"--AND I KNEW SOMETHING WAS WRONG— VERY WRONG!

" I CAN'T BEGIN TO TELL YOU HOW I FELT WHEN I SAW MY FATHER CARRY AWAY SOMEONE HE BELIEVED TO BE ME...

" WITH AN EMPTY FEELING IN MY HEART, I STILL MADE AN EFFORT TO ESCAPE MY PREDICAMENT.

" ALMOST A DAY LATER, I WAS FREE!

" MY FIRST INSTINCT WAS TO RETURN HOME --"

--BUT THE SHAME I FELT WAS OVERWHELMING!

MY FIRST CRISIS AS GUARDIAN HAD LEFT ME FEELING I WAS A TOTAL FAILURE!

UNABLE TO FACE ANYONE, I ENDED UP WANDERING AIMLESSLY ON MOBIUS...

...FOR WHAT SEEMED LIKE DECADES--

--UNTIL I DISCOVERED THE FLOATING ISLAND!

I THOUGHT I WANTED VENGEANCE--

--BUT ALL I REALLY WANT--

--IS MY LIFE AND FAMILY BACK!

I MAY NOT BE WHAT YOU HAD IN MIND--

--BUT I AM FAMILY, ANCESTOR!

AND IF IT'S ANY CONSOLATION--

ANCESTOR?

"--YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE WITH QUESTIONS!"

AMAZING AS IT IS, THIS FRIED LITTLE CIRCUIT APPEARS TO BE OUR CULPRIT!

NOW THAT YOU'VE FOUND THE PROBLEM, WE SHOULD BE BACK TO FULL POWER IN NO TIME!

I'M AFRAID IT'S NOT THAT EASY, FATHER!

THIS CIRCUIT APPEARS TO BE AN ORIGINAL!

AH, GENTLEMEN, HAVE YOU DISCOVERED WHAT THE TROUBLE IS YET?

LOCKE BELIEVES SO, GRANDFATHER SOJOURNER--

SWIISH!

GO AHEAD, LOCKE, WE'RE ALL EARS!

I'M NOT SURE IF WE HAVE A REPLACEMENT PART! WE MAY HAVE TO RECONSTRUCT A NEW ONE FROM SCRATCH--

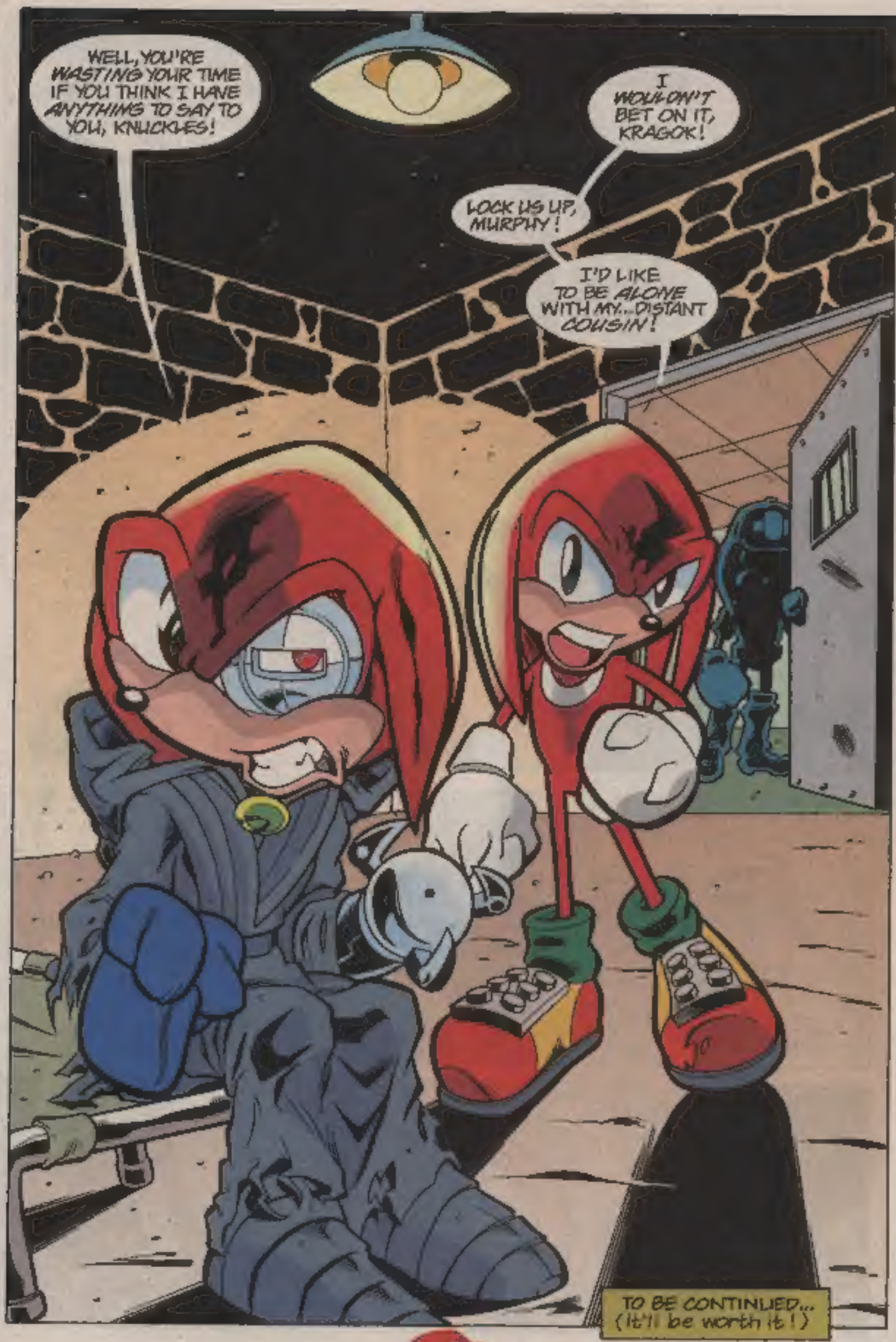
"--AND IF SO, THAT'S GOING TO TAKE A BIT OF TIME BEFORE THE POWER IS BACK ONLINE!"

WE HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO GET ANYTHING OUT OF HIM, GUARDIAN--

--SO YOU'RE MORE THAN WELCOME TO GIVE IT A TRY!

ALRIGHT, MURPHY, OPEN IT UP!

SO YOU FINALLY DECIDED TO SEE ME, EH?


WELL, YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME IF YOU THINK I HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY TO YOU, KNUCKLES!
I WOULDN'T BET ON IT, KRAGOK!
LOCK US UP, MURPHY!
I'D LIKE TO BE ALONE WITH MY...DISTANT COUSIN!
TO BE CONTINUED... (It'll be worth it!)

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#17

JUSTIN F. GABRIE EDITOR

DEBT OF HONOR

KNUCKLES
THE ECHIDNA #18
ON SALE SEPT. 1998!

Next Month: Prepare yourself for the slugfest you've been waiting for since the first three issues: **Knuckles Vs. Kragok!** Desparate to learn the truth about his mysterious ancestor, Knuckles will get it out of his arch enemy — even if it kills them both. Written by Ken Penders. Art by Manny Galan and Andrew Pepoy. **KNUCKLES THE ECHIDNA #18 on sale September 1998!**

In other Mobian news...

SONIC
THE HEDGEHOG #64
ON SALE AUG. 1998!

In two weeks: You've been waiting for this moment and now it's finally here... **Ixis Naugus!!! Sonic** and **Tails** confront the sorceror savant to the trecherous regions of the **Southern Tundra.** Have our Freedom Fighting Duo reached Ixis in time? What secrets lie within its icy wake? Whatever it is, Ixis has traveled the world to find it and he won't let anything get in his way. Story by **Karl Bollers** with art by **Steven Butler** and **Pam Eklund.** Also: Part four of **St. John's "On His Majesty's Secret Service!"** St. John's team are instructed on their first assignment. By **Ken Penders** and **Art Mawhinney.** **SONIC THE HEDGEHOG #64 on sale August 1998!**

In other SEGA news...

NIGHTS
INTO DREAMS #6
ON SALE AUG. 1998!

And in one week: Picking up from last issue, **Nights** is on the brink of extinction. Meanwhile, **Elliot** and **Claris** continue their efforts to maintain not only Nights but the fabric of life itself. Only **Reala** stands in their way and he's no pushover! The exciting saga concludes in this issue by writer **Karl Bollers** with art by fan-fave **Patrick SPAZiante,** along with pencil finishes by **Sam Maxwell** and Inks by **HARVO.** Don't forget about the **Spaz/Harvo/Heroic Age** computer-modeled cover! **NIGHTS INTO DREAMS #6 on sale August 1998! To order, look for coupons in this very issue!**

CATCH YOU ON THE FLIP SIDE!

Justin Freddy Gabrie

Note: Due to the overwhelming amount of e-mail, it is impossible to answer each and every message. However, your opinions are important to us and each message will be read.

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